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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Antitrust

Like most Americans, I have tried to follow the arguments, pro and con, respecting Microsoft's (MS) supposed monopoly status in the world of computing and the internet. I am not an authority on anything, but know a little about many things, especially computers, how they work and function in the real world. I feel qualified to give some general comments on what I think is a travesty of the American judicial system. In brief, keep government out of the legitimate interests of those who need to react to technological changes like the cheetah. Those who cannot compete, whose 19th century mechanical mindset make them more like the three-toed sloth, should simply admit their incompetence and leave the field to others who can compete. Turning to government in the interests of quote smoothing the playing field unquote has become the game of the century. It is the first resort of the incompetent. It needs to stop! The goal is excellence, not mediocrity. But more of that later.

The Netscape browser was and continues to be what one web site called 'technologically inept.' As one who has used both browsers, IE and Netscape, I can tell you that IE is vastly superior in its ability to interpret code and bring useful information to the desktop. Netscape lost because it was an inferior product, not because MS used unfair business practices. Like the sloth, it simply couldn't keep up with the cheetah.

MS's vision that in order for the public to prepare itself to deal with an entirely new way of communicating you needed to integrate the desktop with the web, using the web browser as a bridge, is so innovative and fresh that the 'competition' still doesn't get it. They think the way to solve it is to follow the old fallacy that bigness is goodness. So companies like Netscape were interlocked with other monopolies like AOL. Where was the government throughout that charade of a merger? AOL's corporate culture is the most controlling environment I have ever encountered. As a former user, I can tell you that it was virtually impossible to open my web browser, much less use it.

If Windows is a monopoly it's because of integration. The best way to approach any human problem is to develop a synergistic solution. The result of the integration of desktop, browser and internet was a reality which is greater than the sum of its parts. The best I can compare it to is the way a biological system functions. Integration produced a flexibility that is virtually unlimited in scope. The only monopoly here was the public recognition of a superior product, not to mention the fact that Gates' original agreement with IBM was that his code be included on every machine built using PC architecture. Please notice that even XP has a rudimentary form of MSDOS in the OS's ability to open

a command line and run legacy programs. This has never changed since Windows was invented. And let me regress: if Windows was simply a Mac knock off, why didn't Apple sue for breach of proprietary interests and intellectual rights? Windows was produced independently as an outgrowth of DOS. People misinterpret results and origins all the time. It is possible to arrive at the same destination by taking different routes!

Consumers were not hurt, ever. Only competitors. But that's the nature of the free market. You compete and somebody loses. Why reward the losers? It only produces mediocrity. Which leads me to recall an old saying. It went something like this: the nail that sticks up too much always gets hammered. MS was the nail, the hammer was the DOJ wielded by sore losers. If progress is our most important product, this travesty of an antitrust law suit just set us back to 1891, when the Patent Office director closed the doors of his office by commenting that everything of any usefulness had now been invented. He must be smiling in his grave!

Sincerely yours,

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"So we row on . . . boats against the current."